



Proposed Project 280 ft from runway at Half Moon Bay Airport

Princeton Big Wave report draws hundreds of comments.

By Greg Thomas [greg@hmbreview.com]

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The project, which calls for a 225,000 square-foot, three-story office park paired with a cooperative-style wellness center for developmentally disabled people on Airport Street, has proven to be a lightning rod for controversy among Coastsiders on both sides of the fence.

The first round of review elicited 243 e-mail and hard copy comments, in addition to 64 verbal testimonies presented before the county Planning Commission at a meeting in November.

The county Sheriff's Office of Emergency Services sent in a five-page letter raising concerns about the possibility of a tsunami causing damage to buildings in the area. Statewide tsunami inundation maps released late last year show just about every inch of Princeton under water in the event of a tsunami – that includes the Big Wave project site.

Montara Water and Sanitary District also calls for a more exhaustive report, calling the draft report "deficient, incomplete and incorrect" in its assessments of hydrology and water and sewage supply.

A small portion of the letters illuminates an area of concern relatively overlooked in public meetings: the impact to operations at Half Moon Bay Airport. Caltrans makes note of the project's 280-foot proximity to runways at the airport. Portions of Big Wave poke into the approach zone for one of the runways, and about a third of the project is situated inside an "extremely noise sensitive area," according to the agency. Aircraft Owners and Pilots Association, based in Maryland, takes issue with the "less than significant" impact assessment to the airport stated in the report. "We simply do not believe that the addition of 70 apartments at the approach end of Runway 30 is a prudent decision," wrote association Airport Policy Manager John Collins.

The City/County Association of Governments of San Mateo County Airport Land Use Committee remarks on the language used in the report, offering more detailed definitions of "safety" and a deeper analysis of noise impacts.

The California Coastal Commission also highlights a need for further analysis – in just about every area the project would affect. In a 10-page letter, the commission points out a need for information that would allow commissioners to determine the project's consistency with Local Coastal Program and Coastal Act standards.

Previous estimates of a timetable for Big Wave's move through the county review process are being delayed about a month.

SKYDIVING NIXED AT NEW HAMPSHIRE AIRPORT

by John Koziol jkoziol@citizen.com The Citizen (Laconia, NH.)
January 29, 2010

Citing safety concerns raised by the Federal Aviation Administration, the Laconia Airport Authority [LAA] has rejected plans to operate a skydiving business at the facility.

By a unanimous vote the LAA denied the application of Tom and Mary Noonan, who back in late 2008 asked the authority for permission to run Skydive Laconia from the airport. The couple has operated a tandem parachute business elsewhere and said they were attracted to the Lakes Region by its spectacular scenery and the fact that there are no similar enterprises anywhere nearby. Tom Noonan said that for about \$225 a jump, customers would get the thrill of a five-to-seven-minute descent from 13,000 feet while being safely secured in a two-person harness controlled by an expert parachutist.

Noonan said he expected about 1,000 customers in the business's first year of operation and also expected that the LAA initially would be leery because it was so new to the LAA members. The Noonans wanted to be able to use the airport as a "drop zone" for parachutists, but the LAA, while supportive of the larger business plan, said "no" and instead recommended that the couple make arrangements with nearby property owners. Noonan predicted that despite the LAA's reluctance, the FAA would inevitably rule in his favor.

That scenario, however, seems not to be what happened because in a Dec. 21 letter from the FAA to the LAA, the former, after conducting an "airspace analysis," ruled that skydivers and aviators were not a good mix at the airport.

Subsequently, the LAA's Safety Committee contacted the FAA and had the agency study the proposed landing sites at the airport.

In her letter to the LAA, Tracey McInnis of the FAA's Burlington, Mass. office wrote that her agency had determined that "this proposed landing area would adversely affect the safe and efficient use of the navigable airspace by aircraft and the safety of persons and property on the ground. "FAA must protect for the potential corruption of the glideslope, the Runway Safety Areas (RSA), as well as preclude the possibility of debris being inadvertently dropped on the operating surfaces. The potential for these occurrences are the basis for the objection to the parachute landing areas."

In summary, McInnis wrote, "to have a designated landing area located within an area where aircraft are taxiing, running up and departing/arriving increases the exposure to risk. Given the information provided thus far, it would appear that the proposed skydiving operations would, at best, be a difficult fit into the operations at the Laconia Airport. Pedestrian traffic on active taxiways and runways has been considered to be a safety risk," said McInnis, who closed with the observation that "The mix of traffic at Laconia Airport also presents significant challenges."

Airport users, she said, "range from student pilots to high time corporate pilots. Aircraft range from ultralights and light sport to large, cabin class business jets. The expanded traffic pattern (altitude and width), the variety of aircraft speeds and the prevalence of non-radio aircraft increase the likelihood of skydiver/aircraft conflict. The additional distraction of looking for skydivers while operating in the traffic pattern or on the surface is also cause for concern."

The Noonans, who did not attend the LAA meeting can appeal the authority's denial or file a new application.

FAA Safety Team Seminars Schedule 2010

Effective 2010 the Watsonville based FAAST members, Sven Bock, Abe Hazbun and Rayvon Williams will host WINGs specific seminars. Seminars are posted on FAASafety.gov and held the last Wednesday of each month @ 1930, Watsonville Aviation Education Center

January	Plan your Flight and Fly your Plan!
February	VFR into IMC
March	They're parachuting at Watsonville?
April	Rotary and Fixed Wings in the Pattern
May	An evening with NorCal TRACON
June	National Weather Service
July	TSA and GA?
August	No Meeting or Seminar Watsonville Fly-In and Air Show
September	MRY & SNS Tower Controller Q&A
October	Fuel starvation and exhaustion
November	No Meeting or Seminar Fly safe, enjoy the Holidays
December	No Meeting or Seminar Annual dinner meeting

Coming Events 2010

Feb 24	WPA Meeting
March 2	EAA119
March 17	MRY Bay 99s
March 31	WPA Meeting
April 17	Day in the Sky
Sept. 3, 4, 5	WVI Fly-In
October 30	WRAP Dinner

Just a Reminder....Your 2010 dues are due.

WPA dues of \$20.00 are due each January 1st. Your check payable to WPA can be mailed to PO Box 2074, Freedom, CA 95019 or handed in at the next meeting.

We hope for your continued support and participation. ***Thank you to all of you who have already paid your dues.***

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On the memo line note "legal fund"
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NEXT MEETING

7:00PM Wednesday,
Feb 24, 2010 at EAA-WAEC Building 60
Aviation Way, Watsonville Airport

They're Parachuting at Watsonville ??